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UNCLAS VIENNA 000112

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/I, DRL/CRA, DRL/PHD AND EUR/AGS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL MISSION FOR IRAQ ELECTIONS -  
AUSTRIAN RESPONSE

REF: 04 STATE 274965

This message is sensitive but unclassified.

1. (SBU) Embassy conveyed reftel points to Austrian MFA Middle East Africa Bureau on January 10. Pol Unit Chief followed up with Middle East desk officer Wolfgang Lapuh on January 12. Lapuh agreed with our assessment that successful elections would represent a critical turning point for Iraq. However, he pointed out current GoA policy prohibiting TDYs by Austrian officials in Iraq would likely preclude MFA involvement in the International Mission for Iraq elections (IMIE). Lapuh asked whether Austrians with election observation experience could participate on a private basis. PolOff said that election and election monitoring expertise would be in high demand and urged Lapuh to have such individuals contact Elections Canada to volunteer their services.

2. (SBU) Pol Unit Chief noted recent media accounts of arrangements for out-of-country voting for Iraqis resident in Germany, including polling stations in four German cities. He urged Lapuh to try to facilitate similar arrangements for Iraqis in Austria. Lapuh promised to look into possibilities for Iraqi absentee voting in Austria.  
Brown